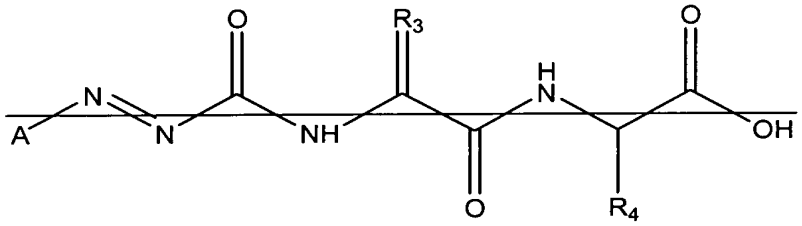
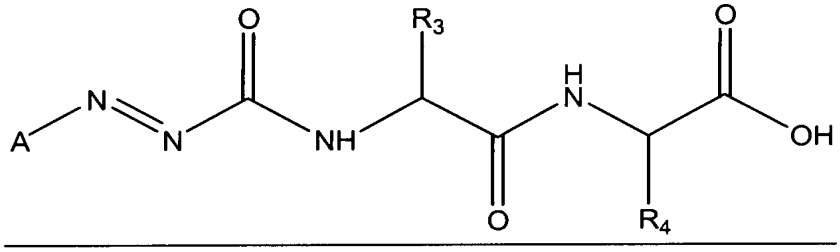
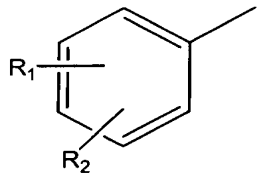
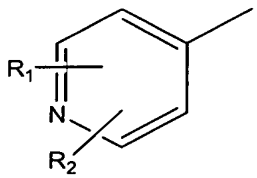
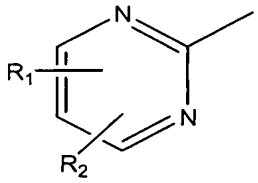
IN THE CLAIMS

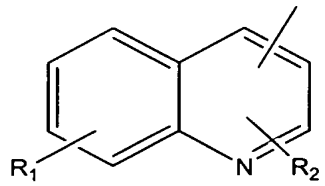
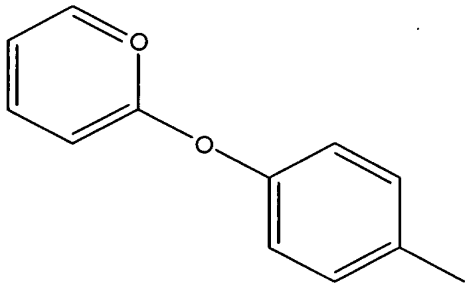
1. (currently amended) A compound with the following formula:





wherein:

A =  or  or 

or  or 

R_1 and R_2 may be the same or different and are [[=]] H, $-CH_3$, $-CH(CH_3)_2$, $-OCH_3$, - Cl, $-CF_3$, $-OCF_3$, or $-SCH_3$;

R_3 is [[=]] an amino acid radical hydrolysable by a carboxypeptidase A; and

R_4 is [[=]] a basic amino acid radical.

2. (currently amended) A compound according to claim 1, wherein:

R_3 is [[=]] a hydrophobic amino acid radical; and

R_4 is [[=]] an arginine or lysine radical.

3. (currently amended) A compound according to claim 1 wherein R_1 is [[=]] H and R_2 is [[=]] -S-CH_3.

4. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1 wherein R_3 is selected from the group consisting of:

tyrosine;

phenylalanine;

alanine;

valine;

leucine;

isoleucine; and

phenylglycine.

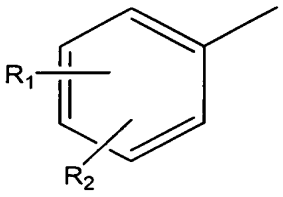
5. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1 wherein R_3 is phenylalanine.

6. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1 wherein R_3 is phenylalanine or tyrosine and R_4 is arginine or lysine.

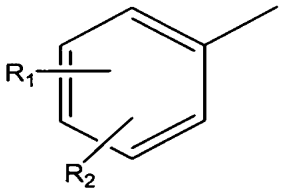
7. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1 wherein R_3 is tyrosine.

8. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein R_1 is selected from the group consisting of: -H and -CH_3, and R_2 is selected from the group consisting of CH_3, O-CH_3 and –S-CH_3.

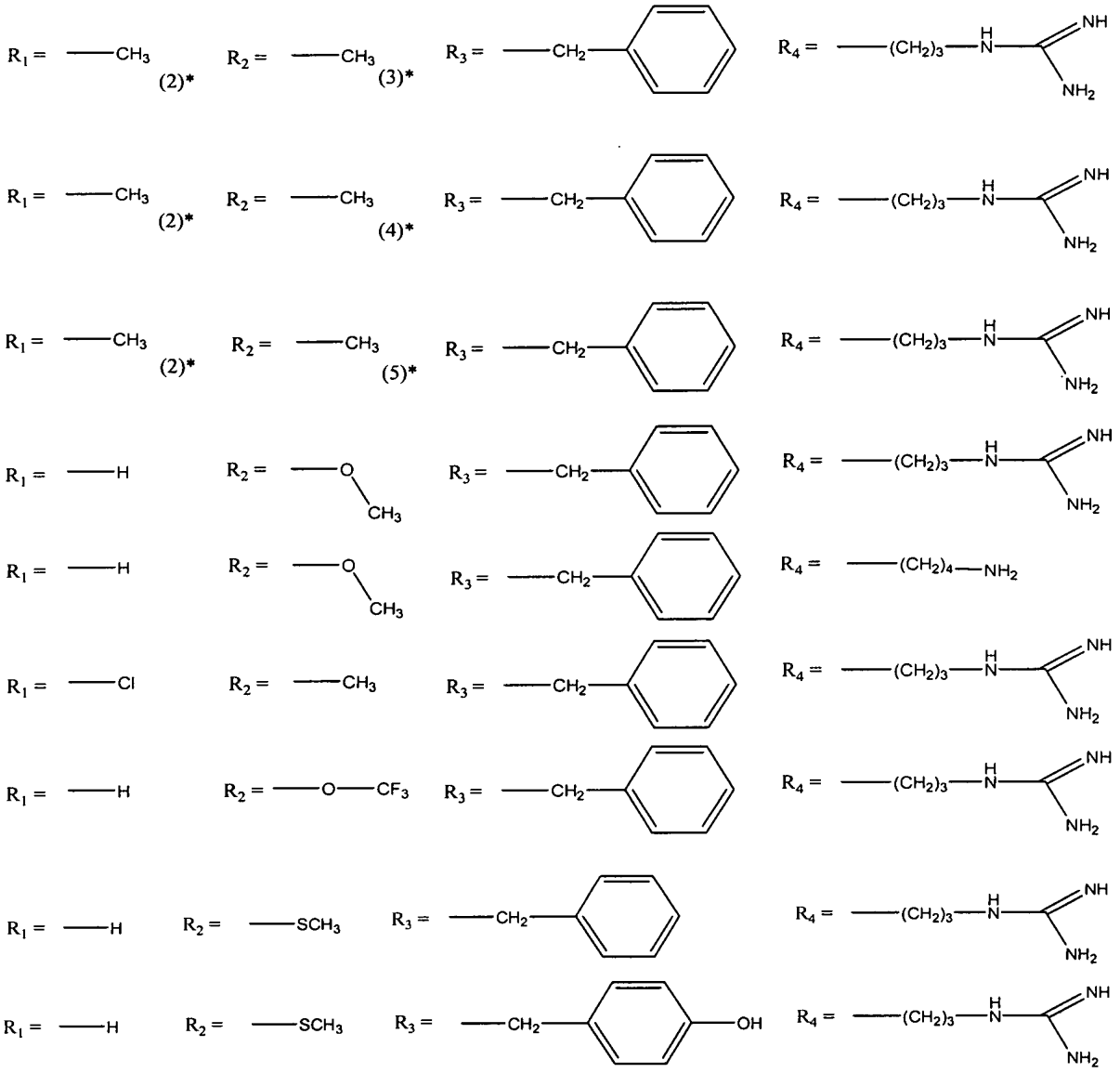
9. (currently amended) A compound according to claim 1, wherein A is:



10. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1 wherein:

A = 

and wherein R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4 are:



wherein the numbers designated with an asterix determine the position of the methyl groups on the phenyl radical.

11. (previously presented) A compound according to claim 1, wherein said compound is 4-methylthiophenylazoformyltyrosine arginine.

12. (currently amended) A method for assaying the activity of a carboxypeptidase N or a carboxypeptidase U in a biological sample, in which:

- said sample is brought into contact with a compound ~~with~~ of the formula (I) according to claim 1, and with a carboxypeptidase A, under conditions that allow hydrolysis of the sample; and
- the reduction in coloration of the sample containing the substrate ~~with~~ of the formula (I) and carboxypeptidase A is measured, resulting from double hydrolysis of the substrate ~~with~~of the formula (I) by the CPN or CPU of the sample and by CPA.

13. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein R_1 [[=]] is H and R_2 [[=]] is -S-CH_3.

14. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein R_4 is an arginine or lysine radical.

15. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the substrate is a compound ~~with~~of the formula (I) in which R_3 is selected from the following amino acid radicals:

- tyrosine:
- phenylalanine;
- alanine;
- valine;
- leucine;
- isoleucine; and
- phenylglycine.

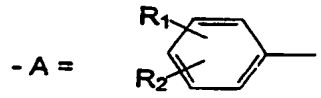
16. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein R_3 is tyrosine.

17. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the substrate is a compound ~~with~~of the formula (I), in which R_3 represents phenylalanine.

18. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the substrate is a compound ~~with~~ of the formula (I) in which R_3 represents phenylalanine and R_4 represents arginine or lysine.

19. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the substrate is a compound ~~with~~ of the formula (I) in which R_1 is selected from –H and $-CH_3$, and R_2 is selected from CH_3, O-CH_3 and –S-CH_3.

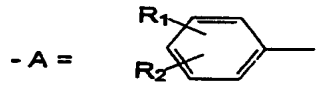
20. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the substrate is a compound ~~with~~ of the formula (I) in which:



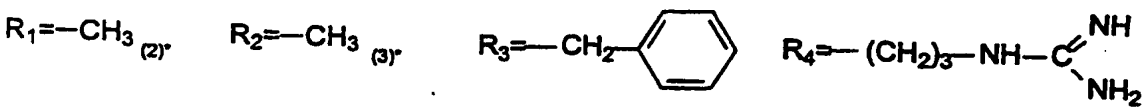
in which:

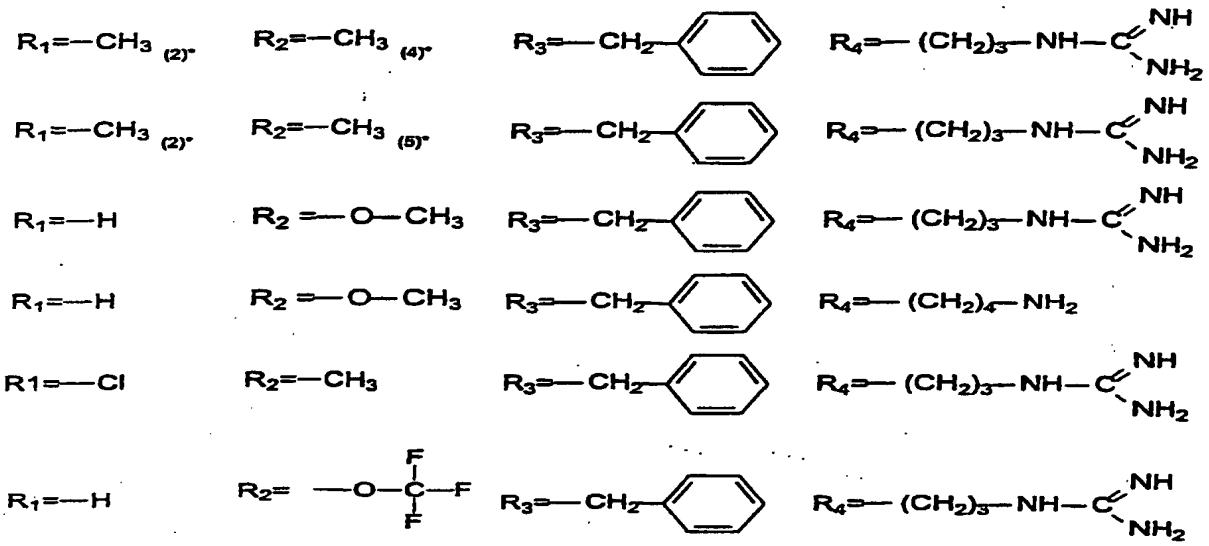
- R_1, R_2 = H, $-CH_3$, $-CH(CH_3)_2$, $-OCH_3$, -Cl, $-CF_3$, $-OCF_3$, $-SCH_3$;
- R_3 = an amino acid radical hydrolysable by a carboxypeptidase A;
- R_4 = a basic amino acid radical.

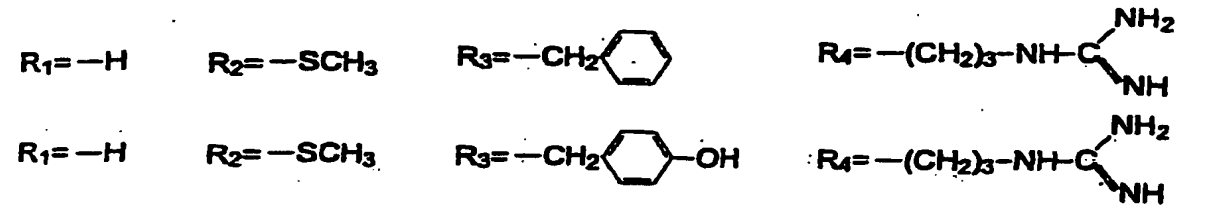
21. (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~21 characterized in that~~ 12, wherein the substrate is a compound ~~with~~ of the formula (I) in which:



said compound being selected from the group constituted by the following compounds:







*the numbers in brackets determining the position of the methyl groups on the phenyl radical.

22. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, in which the compound ~~with~~ of the formula (I) is 4-MTPAFYR (4-methylthiophenylazoformyltyrosine arginine).

23. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the optical density of the mixture is measured without adding CPA, then after adding CPA.

24. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the measured decrease in coloration is compared with values on a calibration curve.

25. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the sample is a blood sample.

26. (currently amended) A method according to claim 25, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the sample is plasma.

27. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the CPA is pancreatic CPA.

28. (currently amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the test sample is brought into the presence of an activator buffer for the time necessary to obtain activation of the carboxypeptidase U the activity of which is to be measured, then into the presence of a protease serine inhibitor.

29. (currently amended) A method according to claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the substrate ~~with~~of the formula (I) is added at the same time as the activator buffer, or simultaneously or immediately after the serine protease inhibitor.

30. (currently amended) A method according to claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein activation is carried out using the thrombin/thrombomodulin complex route.

31. (currently amended) A method for assaying the activity of the constitutional CPN or CPU of a sample and that of the activatable CPN or CPU of the same sample, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the hydrolysis activity of the sample on a sample ~~with~~of the formula (I) is compared after bringing the sample into the presence of an activator buffer, if necessary for the time necessary to obtain activation of the carboxypeptidase U the activity of which is to be measured, then into the presence of a protease serine inhibitor, the observed hydrolysis activity being compared with the hydrolysis activity of the sample on a substrate ~~with~~of the formula (I) in the absence of an activator buffer in accordance with claim ~~21~~12.

32. (currently amended) A method according to claim 21, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the carboxypeptidase is a CPU.

33. (currently amended) A method according to claim 32, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the CPU is TAFI.

34. (currently amended) A method according to claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the sample is treated in the presence and in the absence of a specific TAFI inhibitor.

35. (currently amended) A method according to claim 28, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the specific TAFI inhibitor is CPI.

36. (original) A method for assaying activated TAFI in a blood sample, comprising the following steps:

a) bringing a first aliquot of the sample into contact with a specific TAFI inhibitor and treating it using the method defined in claim 28;

b) treating a second aliquot of the sample using the method of claim 28, in the absence of specific TAFI inhibitor;

c) measuring the Δ OD between the first and second aliquot, representative of the activity of the activated TAFI in the sample.

37. (currently amended) A method according to claim 36 for differentiating between the activity of constitutional TAFI and that of activatable TAFI in the same sample, characterized in that the hydrolysis activity of a third aliquot of the sample is measured on a substrate ~~with~~ of the formula (I) in the absence of a buffer activator.

38. (cancelled)

39. (cancelled)

40. (previously presented) A kit for assaying the activity of a CPN or a CPU in a sample comprising a chromogenic substrate constituted by a compound according to claim 1.

41. (currently amended) A kit for assaying the activity of TAFI in a biological sample, comprising:

a TAFI activator buffer;

carboxypeptidase A;

a substrate ~~with~~ of the formula (I) according to claim 1; and

a TAFI inhibitor.